

To: "Clark Stevens" [(b)(6) privacy] who.eop.gov]; N=Alisha Johnson/OU=DC/O=USEPA/C=US@EPA[]

Cc: []

From: CN=James O'Hara/OU=DC/O=USEPA/C=US

Sent: Wed 9/26/2012 11:30:38 PM

Subject: continues to dribble out

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Feds release new water data from Wyoming fracking area

Denver Business Journal by Cathy Proctor, Reporter

Date: Wednesday, September 26, 2012, 4:40pm MDT

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The U.S. Geological Survey on Wednesday released two reports on samples it took from two groundwater wells near Pavillion, Wyo. — an area that's been the focus of controversy over whether oil and gas operations such as hydraulic fracturing have contaminated drinking water wells.

The natural gas field near Pavillion is owned by Denver-based Encana Oil & Gas (USA) Inc.

The USGS's reports detailed how the samples were collected, and the raw data from the samples, but offered no conclusions, the agency said, per its agreement with the state of Wyoming.

The latest reports show lower levels of benzene, a carcinogen, in groundwater samples than the U.S.

Environmental Protection Agency reported late last year in the area,the Associated Press reports.

But EPA spokeswoman Alisha Johnson said in an emailed statement that the USGS's data is "generally consistent" with the EPA's previously released data.

The sampling and analysis plan was developed by the USGS with help from representatives of Wyoming, the EPA, and the Northern Arapahoe and Eastern Shoshone Tribes.

"Today's USGS reports are intended to provide additional scientific information to decision makers and all interested parties on the composition of the groundwater represented in the aquifer underlying Pavillion," said David Mott, Director of the USGS Wyoming Water Science Center. "While USGS did not interpret the data as part of this sampling effort, the raw data results are adding to the body of knowledge to support informed decisions."

In December 2011, the EPA issued a draft report saying that groundwater pollution in two deep wells near Pavillion is "likely associated with gas production practices, including hydraulic fracturing."